

Peace

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 16 Apr 1998

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adam louis stephanides — 16 Apr 1998, 10:07

On Wed, 15 Apr 1998 Tony Ellis wrote:

Well, the story is about something outliving its time, that's the point made in the very last line. And that is what Weer has been doing. At the time Dan is telling him that story he is an old man, who has outlived most of his contemporaries. He is also a dead man, wandering through his memories, so he's outlived his time in a more literal sense too.

Since this story comes right before the very last paragraph of the novel, I think it serves to make Weer realise it's time to let go. Perhaps that's why he tells it to himself.

I actually hadn't thought about this at all before Rostrum asked the question (shows what a careful reader I am) but I now can see several parallels in addition to this one.

1) Weer has been dead for many years (the tree planted on his grave is now huge) so he has not just outlived his time but "far outlived [his] time," like the sidhe.

2) Like the sidhe, Weer is in a sense the last of his kind: he is the last to remember Cassionsville before it was transformed by the factory he ran.

3) Just as the geese's feathers sing and write after the geese's deaths, Weer's ghost tells stories after his death.

4) The last goose is a fusion of all three sidhe children, and in a sense Weer's ghost "fuses" all the people whose stories he tells.

5) Perhaps most importantly, the immortality the sidhe children gain from being transformed into a flock of geese is a false immortality compared to the true immortality to be gained from baptism. Similarly, Weer's immortality as a ghost is a false immortality. I don't recall Weer expressing any religious convictions, although it's been a while since I read the book. Perhaps that is part of what was missing from Weer's life, and of why his spirit could not find peace.

--Adam